

Stalinist CPP attacks Dr. Scalice's upcoming lecture on the 1971 Plaza Miranda bombing in the Philippines

1 March 2021

The World Socialist Web Site encourages our readers to attend a public lecture, being delivered this week by historian Dr. Joseph Scalice, on the subject of the 1971 bombing of the Liberal Party election rally at Plaza Miranda in the Philippines. The bombing marked a critical step toward the imposition of martial law by President Ferdinand Marcos in 1972, and remains one of the most controversial events in the country's history.

The lecture, sponsored by the UC Berkeley Center for Southeast Asian Studies, will take place on Wednesday, March 3, 5 PM PST (Thursday, March 4, 9 AM in the Philippines; Thursday, March 4, noon AEDT in Australia).

You can register here: <https://cutt.ly/plazamiranda>

Last August Scalice delivered a lecture examining the parallels between the support given by the Stalinist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) to the fascist Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte in 2016, with the role of the Stalinist Parties—the CPP and the PKP—in the establishment of the Marcos dictatorship. One day before the lecture, CPP founder, Jose Maria Sison, launched a malicious attack on Scalice, based on the slander that he is a CIA agent.

In the same manner, Marco Valbuena, Chief Information Officer of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), in a desperate bid to turn people away from this week's lecture, has again maligned Scalice as operating on behalf of the CIA. The reason is obvious. In a chapter of his 2017 doctoral dissertation, carefully examining the Plaza Miranda bombing, Scalice established that the overwhelming weight of historical evidence reveals that the CPP was responsible for the bombing.

The significance of Scalice's historical research on

the Plaza Miranda bombing was noted by Carlos Conde, the senior researcher for Human Rights Watch in the Philippines, who shared the WSWWS article on the upcoming lecture on twitter. "If this claim holds up, it will help upend post-Marcos Philippine history," he wrote.

One needs to add, Scalice's finding constitutes a damning indictment of the cynicism, opportunism and criminality of the CPP, which has slandered anyone, including former party members, who have provided evidence that it was responsible for the bombing.

We publish below a slightly edited version of Scalice's Facebook post, in response to the slanders of Marco Valbuena, and again encourage our readers to register for the lecture.

On February 24, Marco Valbuena, Chief Information Officer of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), published a lengthy statement pre-emptively dismissing my upcoming lecture on the 1971 Plaza Miranda bombing in the Philippines.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the bombing, one of the most controversial and important events in Philippine history. The bombing provided the pretext for Marcos' suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, and was a turning point in the political struggle over the imposition of dictatorship in the country. A year later, Marcos declared martial law.

Acutely sensitive on this topic, the CPP did not wait until my lecture was delivered to respond, but attempted to dismiss my scholarship in advance, employing ad hominem and rhetorical sleights-of-hand. Valbuena termed me a "Trotskyite zealot" who would "spew lies" and "regurgitate the long-exposed falsehoods of the Philippine military and the US CIA." He accuses me of producing an "unabashedly anti-

communist version of Philippine history.”

Readers of the CPP statement should ask themselves: why is the CPP attempting, by attacking me at great length, to dissuade the public in advance from attending my lecture? What it is that the CPP does not want people to hear?

Joma Sison, founder and ideological leader of the party, behaved in a similar fashion when I delivered a lecture in August last year that examined the historical background to the CPP’s enthusiastic support for Duterte in the 2016 election. Sison dedicated an entire issue of *Ang Bayan* to attacking me, before I even delivered my talk. He claimed that it was an “outright lie” that the party ever supported Duterte.

I established, in my lecture, with copious evidence, precisely how the party enabled the rise of Duterte and enthusiastically supported both his presidency and his war on drugs. More than 7,000 people have now viewed the lecture.

Sison responded by repeatedly denouncing me as a CIA agent, and claimed that “all UC Berkeley” knew that the CIA funded my research.

The faculty of the UC Berkeley Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, where I earned my PhD, issued a public statement defending me against Sison’s slanderous accusations:

“We at Berkeley know nothing of the sort. We reject these malicious, reckless and unfounded allegations.

“Scalice, a former Fulbright scholar, is a talented historian whose analysis has transformed understandings of the history of communism in the Philippines. An award-winning teacher, Scalice’s generosity of spirit and his commitment to sharing his deep knowledge of the Philippines, has further transformed the lives of countless students in our Southeast Asian Studies Program.

“We stand with Joseph Scalice.”

The response of the CPP to my upcoming Berkeley lecture is a repeat performance. It attempts, by lies and insinuation, to dismiss my scholarship and dissuade people from examining my evidence and arguments. Their basic political line is that there are only two possible schools of thought. Either you agree with the CPP’s version of history, or you are an agent of the military and the CIA.

It is in this way that the CPP attempts to label my Marxist study of its history as “anti-communist.” The

CPP employs the term “Philippine Left” with a proprietary sensibility. There is no left but the CPP, and Sison is its prophet. This is why my historical exposure of the party’s role stings Sison so badly, for it demonstrates that neither he nor his party merit the name.

I encourage you to register for the talk and attend the lecture. Weigh the evidence for yourself. Don’t allow yourself to be browbeaten by party leaders who think they can continue to hide their own history behind slander and lies.

There are three days left to register.

Again you can register here:
<https://cutt.ly/plazamiranda>



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